

Proposed Tribal Transportation Program (TTP) Safety Management System (SMS) Steering Committee

Background

FHWA's Office of Federal Lands Highway TTP assembled a Safety Management System (SMS) Steering Committee to marshal stakeholders to address safety in Indian Country. In 2008, a Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) was developed; an Implementation Plan was developed in 2011. The goal of the Implementation Plan was for tribal governments to develop Tribal Highway Safety Improvement Programs (HSIP).

These documents led to several accomplishments by the SMS Steering Committee including:

National and Regional Tribal Safety Summits; training and development; data collection projects with individual tribes; technical assistance; and research projects. The SMS Committee had a significant role in the establishment of the Tribal Transportation Program Safety Fund (TTPSF).

Once the TTPSF was established, the SMS Steering Committee became inactive. Now that the TTPSF is two years old, we believe it's time to redefine the committee's purpose and to complement the TTPSF on a national scale.

Transportation safety is a major problem in Indian Country. In 2010, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) identified Motor Vehicle Injuries as the leading cause of death for American Indians and Alaska Natives. According to the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS), in many states, fatal crash rates are several times over represented among Native American populations compared to all other races. In the 4 years from 2010 to 2013 there were 1721 deaths of American Indian and Alaska Natives from roadway crashes reported.

Approximately 75% of these crashes occurred on roads likely to be in the TTP National Tribal Transportation Facility Inventory. Studies have shown that these alarming statistics are actually likely to be more severe because they are based on information that is highly likely to be underreported.

However, we believe decisions can be made on the available data and these alarming statistics will serve as a call to action for the TTP and federal agencies that a role in improving transportation safety in Indian Country.

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Objective

FHWA's TIP is leading an effort to re-establish the TIP SMS Steering Committee with the following goals:

- Develop a committee charter that will define its mission, and how the committee is organized, including a member selection process.
- Update the 2008 Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) for Indian Lands, and to generally address transportation safety needs in Indian Country.
- Update the 2011 Implementation Plan.
- Identify a budget and resources to fund the committee's efforts.

The intent of this proposal is to develop a working committee that will reach out to all stakeholders, engaging Indian tribes and federal agencies whose mission is to improve tribal transportation, and to revise the existing SHSP and the SMS Implementation Plan. It is likely that subcommittees will be formed as the committee works through the planning process.

Proposed Committee Composition

Committee Co-Chairs:	Russell Garcia,	TIP Safety Program Manager
	Adam Larsen,	TIP Safety Engineer

To begin this effort, we recommend the following preliminary committee composition:

Committee Membership: Tribal Governments - 4 members (to be selected by the other members)

FHWA Resource Center – **1** member
FHWA Office of Safety – **1** member
FHWA Division Office – **1** member
BIA Division of Transportation - 1 member
BIA Regional Offices - 2 members
BIA Indian Highway Safety - 1 member

Team Resources: TTAP

Centers for Disease Control, Motor Vehicle Injury Prevention
Indian Health Service
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)

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Preliminary Schedule

Due Date

Activity

September 2015

Committee Kickoff Meeting at NTIC

The committee should seek to hold one face-to-face meeting each year. This meeting should be scheduled in conjunction with other national events such as NTIC, TRB, or the Lifesavers Conference. In addition, quarterly web conference meetings should occur to allow committee members to discuss progress on the SHSP initiatives. Given that this will be a working committee, additional virtual meetings should be held as necessary, including subcommittee meetings, to meet deadlines that the committee will establish.